

C. Claims

The following is a complete listing of the claims, and replaces all earlier versions and listings.

1. (Currently Amended) A process for producing a cleaning blade[[;]], the process comprising the steps of:

(1) impregnating with an isocyanate compound at least part of the surface portion of a blade formed of a urethane resin;

(2) after the impregnation, blowing warm air or hot air on the blade surface to remove the isocyanate compound remaining on the blade surface[[;]], the warm air or hot air having a temperature not lower than the melting point of the isocyanate compound; and

(3) allowing the urethane resin that forms the blade to react with the isocyanate compound with which the blade stands impregnated, to form a cured layer.

2. (Original) The process for producing a cleaning blade according to claim 1, which further comprises, between the steps (2) and (3), the step of further removing with a solvent the isocyanate compound remaining on the blade surface.

3. (Original) The process for producing a cleaning blade according to claim 1, wherein the step (1) is carried out by immersing the blade in an isocyanate compound bath.

4. (Original) The process for producing a cleaning blade according to claim 1, wherein, in the step of impregnating the blade with an isocyanate compound, the urethane resin that forms the blade has a water content of 1% by weight or less.

5. (Original) The process for producing a cleaning blade according to claim 1, which further comprises the step of deactivating excess unreacted isocyanate groups with an active hydrogen compound causative of no cross-linking reaction.

6-10. (Cancelled)